

Faith Family News

A Spiritual Resource For Your Family

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Summer 2014

Volume 3 Number 2

Marriage Destroyers: An Unforgiving Spirit

How to Forgive

by Mike Ennis

This is the last lesson dealing with the devastating effect of an unforgiving spirit. An unforgiving spirit has the potential to destroy a marriage. We must learn to forgive and be reconciled to our spouses. However, forgiveness is not baseless.

I. The basis for forgiveness

A. Forgiveness is based on the commands of Christ.

And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses (Mark 11:25).

So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses (Matthew 18:35).

You may not be able to forgive someone who has wronged you based on how you feel, but you can forgive them based on obeying God. We do what He tells us to whether we feel like it or not because we love Him.

B. Forgiveness is based on God's example.

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you (Ephesians 4:32).

Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye (Colossians 3:13).

C. Forgiveness is based on Christ's example.

Then said Jesus, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

D. Forgiveness is based on reality. Do you know why God's Word commands us to forgive one another? It is because God knows we are all going to need forgiveness and we are going to need to give forgiveness. All of us mess up; all of us occasionally offend

people. All of us are struggling saints who need to be patient with others. This is reality. See Matthew 18:21-35.

E. Forgiveness is based on being a peacemaker.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God (Matthew 5:9).

Peacemakers are the ones who give in for the sake of the relationship. They forgive because they have the greater goal in mind; oneness in the marriage becomes more important than "rights" or "who is wrong and right."

Forgiveness seeks to win the war, not every argument. The successful person is the one who finds God's will and does it. In a marriage, the goal is keeping the marriage intact and growing the one flesh relationship.

F. Forgiveness is based on love.

Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins (Proverbs 10:12).

He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends (Proverbs 17:9).

We tend to excuse or forgive the faults and wrongs of those we love more readily than those of others.

II. How to forgive your spouse

A. In obedience to God, make a decision to forgive.

Forgiveness is a decision. It is not a matter of feelings or forgetfulness. It is a matter of determining that you are going to do what God wants you to do. It is a matter of praying and making a commitment to Him to forgive the offending person.

B. Forgiveness is a promise to God that if thoughts of the offense come to your mind, you will not dwell on them.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are

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Every Need Supplied

by Marlin Carpenter

When the Israelites needed an escape, God led them out of captivity. When they were hungry, God sent manna from Heaven. When they were thirsty, God gave them water out of a rock. When they had suffered long, God gave them the Promised Land. He gave Adam and Eve clothes when they were naked, Abraham a lamb as a substitute for his son, Samson strength when he

had none, the widow and her son oil when they were destitute, David courage to fight a giant, some of the

disciples fish when their nets were empty, sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and healing to all who hurt. And ultimately, salvation to all who were lost!

God most certainly cares about His people and stands always ready to help. The Book of Psalms says,

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help (121:1). *But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer* (40:17). *Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice* (63:7). *But I am poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou art my help and my deliverer* (70:5).

In the summer when we are picking all the produce from our gardens, I am reminded of the provisions of God. It is not only in the big things that God has cared for our needs, but in the small, or seemingly small, things of life. In His infinite knowledge and wisdom He knew exactly the needs we would have and supplied everything to

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GOD MOST CERTAINLY CARES ABOUT HIS PEOPLE AND STANDS ALWAYS READY TO HELP.

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Editorially Speaking

When Pastor Mike Ennis brought forth the idea of publishing a periodical in a newspaper or tabloid format, many in our faith community were in full agreement to the potential such a publication could have. We believed the one common link most people still had was a desire for strong, functional, loving and caring families. Through changing secular mores and legislation, the culture is impacting families in unprecedented, and sadly, negative ways. This is true whether your family is biologically connected through marriage and off-spring or is a family of like-minded people with whom you interact regularly. The latter is often true for many who no longer have biologically connected relationships, or their family is diminished due to death. In a strikingly dissimilar way some people's biological family is so dysfunctional death would only improve upon it. That last statement is made tongue-in-cheek, but many of our readers can affirm the reality of it.

Pastor Mike's spiritually inspired idea is taking wings in Faith and Family News. Our goal is still the same as it was in the fall of 2012—not to build a church, not to build an organization, and certainly not a spit-in-your-eye rant on how society is not like it was when we were growing up. Our goal is to build the family—your family.

We are taking FAFN to the marketplaces—convenience stores,

professional offices, hospitals, fairs, and the internet, to name a few. If you see one in any location we place them, take it; it's yours. It's our gift to you to fulfill an unction from God. We need more prayer supporters to enlarge upon that idea.

We need more well-traveled sites where he can place FAFN. We also could use paper racks, volunteers to distribute and, of course, financial supporters. You knew I would eventually get here, didn't you? Let's face it, we buy Girl Scout cookies, pay to see our high school team play, buy tickets to community theater and similar entities. We do it because we know it's for a good cause and helps them improve upon their mission. Every cent contributed to FAFN goes to getting the paper out. Nobody receives any compensation, including our writers, staff and distribution team. To date it is an all-volunteer army. Every dollar donated purchases eleven copies of our twelve page family-oriented publication. If you would like to help, send your gift to VBC (FAFN), 610 West Alto Road, Kokomo, IN 46902. It's for the greatest cause.



Morris Starkey is retired from Indiana University Kokomo and lives with his wife, Donna, in Miami County. They have two children and five grandchildren.



Well, I could have cast the first stone!

Old Timer's Corner Happiness Through Surrender

by Jim Wright

First, a few dry facts to set the scene. I was born in October 1933. I had my first airplane ride in the summer of 1938. I was saved (accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior) late in 1939. I had my second airplane ride the summer of 1945. My Christian life was a series of ups and downs, but the Lord finally got my attention in 1946. It culminated in hearing a sermon about chastity for young people, and I made a promise to the Lord and myself that I would never kiss a girl until I was sure she was the one I was to marry. The promise was not hard to keep. Girls did not like me. I was from a poor family, and was timid and awkward. But I knew one thing—I wanted to learn to fly airplanes. Now the stage is set.

Upon graduation from high school at Wheaton Academy, I got a job and started taking flying lessons. I loved it. I was good at it. I had 33 hours towards the 40 required for a private license by the end of the summer. My Dad and I found and bought a Piper J-3 Cub for \$75 and an old furnace burner. It needed some work, so I

suspended my flying until I could finish in the Cub, our own plane, which would save money. While starting college, we worked on the plane. My college advisor asked me what would be the direction of my life. I knew that an engineer drove a train, so I told him that I wanted to be an aeronautical engineer. So he loaded me up with math and science classes.

But that question started me thinking about where my life was going. I told the Lord that He could do anything He wanted to with my life, as long as he kept me in this country so I could fly. I didn't want to be stuck in a mud hut in Africa as a missionary or something. I figured there were thousands of jobs in this country He could use me in. That was reasonable, wasn't it?

Well, you know, God doesn't take kindly to being limited like that! I hadn't realized yet that if He isn't Lord of All, He isn't lord at all! So what do you suppose He did about it? Well for starters, He allowed our

airplane work to be slowed. In fact it went backwards. First, due to some misunderstandings and government paperwork, we had to take the wings back off and haul them to our mechanic's airport, instead of flying them on a ferry permit. Next, the morning the plane was going to be inspected and licensed, a windstorm wrecked the fuselage. Then later when we had the new fuselage ready to put the wings back on, the hangar where our wings were stored burned down and with it our wings!

Not only that, but I realized that in college, I couldn't get Cs without studying like I had in high school, and I found I was in danger of flunking out. In short, I was constantly miserable. Near the end of the second semester, I finally realized that the Lord was not going to let me be happy holding out on Him. He didn't want any strings attached. He wanted full surrender to His will, even before I knew what it was. At first I thought that was asking too much, but after coming to a full realization of how much

He sacrificed for me, just because He loved me, I came to the conclusion that it was perfectly reasonable.

I had this picture of God as a huge genie with me clenched in his fist, rubbing my nose in a mud hut in Africa, saying, "Now I've got you, you little varmint; take that!" Wow, what a distorted picture, huh? But I came to the conclusion that He was going to keep me miserable until I surrendered, and He certainly had the power to do it. I was powerless to make myself happy. I figured that if I was destined to be miserable, I might as well be miserable in a mud hut in Africa as anywhere in the U. S. At least He would be happy. So I finally and completely surrendered. I thought for sure he would want me to be a missionary. It turns out I was wrong. He didn't want me to be a missionary; He just wanted me to be willing to be a missionary. He wanted me to be an engineer!

Immediately after making the surrender decision, things began hap-

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THE BOOK SHELF

by Jeanine Garrison



"Godly sorrow happens when you are gripped by your sinful separation from God and desire to be restored to him at any cost."

— Heath Lambert

Christian writer, speaker, and apologist Josh McDowell asserts, "Pornography is the greatest threat to Christianity ever." Think about what he is saying; through all of history pornography is the greatest threat ever! That is a very weighty and sobering statement. Availability and access to pornography through the internet and other media sources has caused the viewing of it to skyrocket. A person no longer has to look a clerk in the face when he buys pornography; he can merely go in his room, shut the door, and turn on his computer. The result of this hidden sin is horrendous physical and spiritual harm done to marriages, children, and the moral fiber of our society.

Pastor Heath Lambert has counseled men about their struggles with pornography for years and assures us that this sin is prevalent in the church (even in the pulpit) as well as in secular society. In his book *Finally Free: Fighting for Purity with the Power of Grace* published by Zondervan, Lambert offers help and hope for those who for years have lost the struggle to be free of this addicting sin. In clarifying his purpose for writing *Finally Free*, Lambert states: "People who are trapped in the deceitful web of pornography do not need more information about pornography. . . . This book is about the amazing power of Jesus Christ to free you from pornography" (p. 12).

Although moved with compassion for those caught in pornography, Lambert cuts through the excuses and half-truths people give to expose the root of the sin. He has seen many weep over their sin but emphasizes that there is a difference between worldly sorrow and godly sorrow. He discusses the importance of accountability and how to use it effectively, rather than falling into the pitfalls that plague many accountability groups. Lambert stresses the radical measures that will be nec-

essary to deal with and overcome pornography. Subsequent chapters deal with fighting pornography through using confession, one's spouse, humility, and gratitude. He ends the list with a dynamic relationship with Jesus. He writes: "You need to be the kind of person who fights for a close relationship with Jesus more than you fight against pornography. Your struggle isn't just to avoid looking at porn. It's more glorious than that. You have the unspeakable privilege of being invited to have a real relationship with the Savior of your soul who alone has the Father's seal of approval. . . . When you find yourself working to look to Christ more than you find yourself working to avoid porn, you'll know you've turned the corner" (p. 144).

At the end of each chapter, Lambert has a page titled "Fighting for Purity with the Power of Grace" where he asks thought-provoking questions and makes suggestions for actions that can help the reader apply his teaching.

Everything I have heard about pornography stresses the extreme difficulty in overcoming this addiction, especially for men because they are so visually oriented. For the Christian who sincerely is ready and willing to put his love for God before his love for sin, *Finally Free* offers real help and hope. If one doesn't have a problem with pornography, most likely he knows someone who does and who needs help. I heartily recommend this book to anyone, not just those struggling with the issue of pornography. Regardless of the sin that besets you, the cause, pattern, and outcome of sin is the same. *Finally Free* offers real hope to the Christian who truly longs to be healed and free.

Jeanine Garrison lives in Clinton County with her husband Tim. The couple has three grown children.



"My fear is not that our great movement ... will eventually cease to exist or one day die from the earth. My fear is that our people will become content to live without the fire, the power, the excitement, the supernatural element that makes us great."

— John Wesley 1703-1791

Aging Gracefully "On Being An Expert"

by Morris Starkey

Recently, a person contacted me regarding my hometown's history. As he put it, I was an "expert" on this subject. You see, a few years ago a friend and I gave a series of talks at community gatherings on the history of my hometown, but I didn't think that qualified me as an expert. Somehow, though, that historian persona has kind of stuck to me.

Personally, I don't like being an expert on anything. We expect a lot from our experts. Being an authority on something can be a heavy burden to bear—a tough taskmaster. Speak on something from a perspective of real knowledge and you are soon besieged with questions that can go beyond the scope of that knowledge. We virtually crucify our leaders when they demonstrate a lack of knowledge about something. After all, didn't we put them in office because they were the experts?

Knowledge and expertise can come from at least a couple of sources. We can assimilate expertise through reading about things, or we can get it through experience. I prefer the learning of many things through reading. Learning by experience can be painful.

As we age, we are often looked to as a resource of knowledge and

wisdom. While a senior citizen's lifetime affords a full gamut of learning experiences, joyful and painful, life doesn't always teach us everything. My wife's grandfather, who lived to be 101 years of age, was once asked how he was able to live so long. He responded, rather dryly, "I don't know, but it wasn't easy."

There is no shame in admitting we may not know something. Admission of that fact is a key to learning. We've all known those who speak as though they were an authority on just about everything. We know how tedious it can be to bear with those kinds of people. My dad often quipped that an expert was anybody who was fifty miles from their home. There truly was only One who lived Who knew everything. It was said of Jesus, *Never man spake like this man* (John 7:46). Jesus' deity endorsed His words. We aren't Jesus. It's okay to admit we need instruction. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. Jesus in our life is the key to aging gracefully.

Morris Starkey is retired from Indiana University Kokomo and lives with his wife, Donna, in Miami County. They have two children and five grandchildren.



"God helps those who help themselves" – a wise and good quote that everyone knows is from the Bible. But, in fact, it isn't. It was a man, not God who spoke the well known proverb. It was Benjamin Franklin in his Poor Richard's Almanac.



"Rover, your gift test indicates you'd do best at fetching and sitting at my feet, but our family needs someone to sit on the branches and sing. Do you think you could handle that?"

Faith & Family News is published by Victory Baptist Church, Kokomo, IN, and distributed FREE to Kokomo area residents.

Contact us at editorfaithandfamily@gmail.com.

5,000 Copies Published Quarterly

For additional copies, call (765) 453-9768.

Mother's Corner

by Ashlee Shoaff

A foundational argument regarding the rearing of our children stands before us—whether or not we teach them about sin. Sin as a conversational term has become obsolete, even taboo. Understanding the meaning and pinnacle of Christendom (Easter) is irrelevant if a people discount sin's existence, or its value as a worldview. If this is the state of our culture, how do we continue to have relevance to the world? Even more, how do we proceed to equip our children?

In a 2008 USA Today article, Tim Keller of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Manhattan speaks about "sin" to his audiences, which are younger than forty and seventy per cent single, with lots and lots of explanation. He stated, "They do get the idea of branding, of taking a word or term and filling it with your own content, so I have to rebrand the word 'sin'." Stating sin in terms of self-centeredness, the acorn from which it all grows, seemingly carries more weight these days rather than the word sin." Keller continued by saying "Individually, that means 'I live for myself, for my own glory and happiness, and I'll work for your happiness if it helps me.' Communally, self-centeredness is destroying peace and justice in the world, tearing the net of interwovenness, the fabric of humanity." He even stated that sin is a term deemed outdated to this generation. To counter his approach to keep the term alive may seem appropriate, but the hope is to point his congregation, our children, and the rest of the world to fellowship with God through Christ.

It's not that sin is dead, but our culture is possibly apathetic about the effects of sin, or selfishness. Selfishness caused the children of Israel to willfully put God to the test by demanding the food they craved (Psalm 78:18). They essentially were telling God that what He gave them was not good enough. Adam and Eve were quick to fulfill their desire (Genesis

3:1-13); rebelling against the authority of God's precept was at the root of fulfilling their craving. Today the same principles of sin continue, albeit the current understanding of sin in this culture has changed. The Ellison Research, August 2007, found the following statistics are what Americans call sin:

- Adultery - 81%
- Racism - 74%
- Using "hard" drugs, such as cocaine, LSD - 65%
- Not saying anything if a cashier gives you too much change - 63%
- Having an abortion - 56%
- Homosexual activity or sex - 52%
- Not reporting some income on your tax returns - 52%
- Reading or watching pornography - 50%
- Gossip - 47%
- Swearing - 46%
- Sex before marriage - 45%
- Homosexual thoughts - 44%
- Sexual thoughts about someone you are not married to - 43%
- Doing things as a consumer that harm the environment - 41%
- Smoking marijuana - 41%
- Getting drunk - 41%
- Gambling - 30%
- Not attending church or religious services regularly - 18%

In surveying the 10 Commandments alone, sin is consuming oneself with anyone or anything more than God, fulfilling one's desires with disregard to the impact on others, and not being content with what you have been given. Jesus' reply is *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments* (Matthew 22:37-40).

In Genesis 4:7, God addresses Cain with a question regarding his sin

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The Fundamentals – Part 4

by Matt Turner

Well, friends, we have come to the final installment of this series on the fundamentals of the faith. I will admit the last article ended on a sour note. However, this is where it really gets good. Now we are going to start talking about what's great about being a Christian in this life. Sure, Heaven is going to be wonderful, but what about the here and now? I have good news. The fifth and final fundamental of the faith deals with the benefits of being a believer today.

We have already dealt with the bad news. The fact is God has and will judge sin, and it ain't pretty! The final judgment on a person's soul is unimaginably horrifying. However, God does offer free and full pardon based on the work of His Son, Jesus Christ. For those of us who have accepted God's gift of salvation through faith in God's grace alone, we now have entered into a personal, familial relationship with the Creator God and all the other millions who have done likewise. That's why we can refer to God as our Heavenly Father.

The fifth and final point in our Statement of Faith is: we believe in the spiritual relationship of all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, living a life of righteous works, separation from the world, and witnessing of His saving grace through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. This point deals with our purpose in this world.

Far too many people are living simply for themselves. They are missing out on the bigger picture. A believer's life is about bringing God the honor and glory He deserves. When we are adopted into God's family, we certainly gain innumerable blessings; however, there are also some new responsibilities. Although a believer no longer has to fear the eternal punishment which awaits all the unsaved, he does need to fear the consequences of falling out of the sweet fellowship possible now that he is a part of God's family.

The first part of this point deals with one particular benefit of being saved. Jesus equates salvation with a new birth. A person is spiritually still-born at his physical birth. When you accept Christ as Savior and Lord of your life, God's Holy Spirit indwells you and you are born again. Now you are a Child of God and a brother or sister to everyone else who has also placed his faith in the shed blood of Jesus.

Now that you have the Holy Spirit indwelling you, you have the potential to live a life that will not only please God, but will also bring Him the honor and glory He is due. In other words, now you have the ability to live for the very reason you were created for in the first place. Before sin entered into the world, God and man had a unique relationship. Even though that relationship was broken by sin, the Holy Spirit works in us until we attain the promised, perfected state which awaits us in eternity.

Until then, we are to focus on living for God and others. It is no longer about us. We are to be busy about our Father's business. The main occupation of a believer is to help others become believers. When we speak of doing righteous works, there is no work more righteous than helping a Hell-bound sinner escape the eternal flames prepared for Satan and all his rebellious angels.

After an individual is won to the Lord, there is the business of being assimilated into a local group of believers for fellowship and accountability. I know some of you believe you can worship and serve God all alone out in nature. Stop fooling yourself! You need others, and others need you. Find a place for public worship and a place to join with the "body of Christ" to reach a dying world for our Savior.

Yes, reaching the lost is the most important work you can be involved in, but don't forget there are plenty of other needs which must be addressed. Jesus was not simply concerned about the spiritual aspect of life. He cared for the physical troubles of people as well. He preached about all areas of life. We need to be concerned that we are living a life that will be well-pleasing to the Lord. We should want to be the type of spouse, parent, church member, worker, and citizen God wants us to be.

We need to understand God is concerned with our behavior in every area of life. Furthermore, people are watching to see if getting saved has really made a difference in our lives. Fortunately, God is still gracious when we sin; however, there are still consequences that may negatively affect our relationship with God and/or others.

The aspect of being separated from the world sounds like a contradiction. It is impossible to separate

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Cookin' Corner

by Donna Starkey

My daddy was the first special man in my life. Today the special men in my life have expanded to include my husband, my son, my son-in-law, and three grandsons. The recipe that I am sharing this issue is my daddy's blueberry muffins. My sisters and I have all used this recipe, but according to my niece Danielle, our muffins never taste as good as Granddad's because he "puts a lot of love in his." Along that same line, my husband says that he can always tell if I have made his meal with love. Proverbs 15:17 tells us that it is better to have a meal of herbs (vegetables) where love is than a meal of stalled or fattened ox where there is hatred. I hope that you enjoy making these muffins and that you make them with a lot of love.

Daddy's Blueberry Muffins

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup soft butter or margarine
1 cup sugar
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 teaspoons baking powder
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups fresh blueberries or a 12 oz. pkg. frozen berries
2 cups flour
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk

Beat butter until creamy; then add sugar and beat until fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating between each one. Add vanilla, baking powder and salt. Fold in one half of the milk and flour and stir. Add in the rest of the milk and flour. Fold in the blueberries.

Bake at 375 degrees for 25-30 minutes. This makes 18-24 muffins.

Donna Starkey is married to the Editor and lives in Miami County. She enjoys cooking, reading and spoiling her five grandchildren.



Running the Wrong Race

www.freechristianillustrations.com/suffering

A man raced off to a closing-down sale to buy a TV. He ran so fast that if he had been competing at the Olympics he would have broken a world record. Yet, for all his effort and amazing speed, he did not receive either a gold medal or a lucrative sponsorship—nor was his name listed in the record books. His trophy was a half-price TV he would soon put out for curbside rubbish collection.



Are we running the wrong race? Are we using our innate energy to gain something of limited value? Why run after material gain or fame when death invariably takes it all away? How does attaining personal riches and glory help us beyond the grave? Job 1:21a: *Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return.*

Nothing we acquire on earth can buy our way into heaven. Only by accepting God's gift of Salvation through believing in Christ can we be saved. Once saved, we are on the starting block. From that point every day is an opportunity to run our race before the Lord. If our life is run in His direction, we not only prevail on earth but become eternal winners with perpetual rewards and trophies complete with a guarantee of everlasting satisfaction (Hebrews 12:1).

Protect Your Children from the "Summer Slide"

by Jill Garrison

Your children are probably looking forward to this summer and all kinds of the fun activities, but one thing you want to make sure that they don't experience is the "summer slide." According to the Reading Is Fundamental website, "children who do not read over the summer will lose more than two months of reading achievement. Summer reading loss is cumulative. By the end of 6th grade children who lose reading skills over the summer will be 2 years behind their classmates" (www.rif.org/us/literacy-resources/summer-reading-slide.htm). Therefore, it is very important for your children to read over the summer vacation.

Here are some tips to help make summer reading a priority in your home:

- Be an example. Let the children see you reading the newspaper, a magazine, or a book around home. Take a paperback or your Kindle along on the family vacation and outings. Above all, your children should see you reading your Bible at home and on vacation. Turn off the TV and listen to an audio book while you are working around the house. Talk to your children about the books you are reading, what you are learning, and how it has made a difference in your life. By doing so, you are showing them that reading is a useful and enjoyable part of everyday life. Your example will help motivate them to become better readers themselves.
- Set aside a consistent time each day for reading. Choose a time

that works best with your daily schedule, but don't plan reading for a time when your children are worn out from the day's activities, especially if reading is a struggle. My cousin's children have "quiet time" every day they are at home. "Quiet time" starts at approximately 1:00 p.m. and means all children must take a nap, look at books, or read (depending on their ages) for at least 30 minutes. While consistency is important, don't be too regimented. Some summer activities will make sticking to the schedule impossible. You may also want to consider being flexible about bedtime for a child who is really engrossed in a book.

- Read aloud to your children. When your children start reading on their own, it is tempting to stop reading to them, but children of all ages (and adults) like to have someone read to them. When we were growing up, our parents read aloud to us during family devotions, but our mom also read many fiction books to us as a part of our before bedtime routine. Over the years, she read the Little House, Black Stallion, Chronicles of Narnia, Sugar Creek Gang, and Derwood Inc. series to us, as well as many other books. This was one of the most enjoyable parts of our day. Reading a more difficult book to your children helps them to learn new vocabulary and concepts. It also helps them to learn about different methods of storytelling and imparting information. Reading aloud to a child who struggles can be very beneficial. Ask him questions and discuss what you are reading

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According to Polls . . .

Marital status has little relationship with readership of the Bible. Thirty-eight percent of people who are currently married read the Bible at least once a week, compared to 35% of those who are not married. Older people are more likely to read the Bible than are younger people. Fifty percent of those over the age of 65 read the Bible at least weekly, compared to 27% of people between the ages of 18 and 29. Thirty-six percent of people in their 30s and 40s read the Bible that frequently.

— Gallup News Service

Thomas Goes on Vacation

by Terry Seagraves

Everyone is very busy; school is over and we get to go on a trip! Once a year we have a family reunion at my grandparents' home. Let me tell you, when we have a reunion, it is huge. My grandparents live on a farm and it takes us a whole day to get there, but it is worth it. You see, I have seven aunts and seven uncles and over eighty-three cousins.

Momma is so excited to see her parents again and is very busy trying to get everything ready for us. We all do our best to help, and I keep my younger brothers and sisters occupied with games so they don't get underfoot. I pretend we are pirates and are looking for buried treasure. We have so much fun and Momma really appreciates my help. The older brothers and sisters help with the packing and running errands to get what we need for the long trip.

There is a family in our church that has a big motor home, and they visit the humans that live on the farm. This really makes it easier for us, but we have to be careful that no one sees us. Can you just picture their faces if they knew a large family of mice was traveling with them? My older brother loves to tease their children and tickle their noses when they are sleeping, but Daddy gets really upset when he finds out.

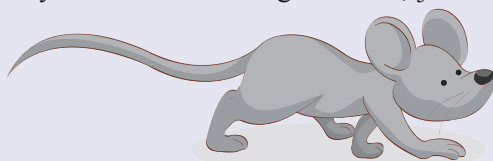
My grandparents live in a huge barn with lots of other animals, and there is a pond and lots of trails we get to hike on. Grandpa is very crafty and makes wonderful toys for us to play with; he has as much fun as we do. Momma declares that Grandpa is going to really hurt him-

self if he doesn't slow down, but he just winks at her and goes about his business having fun with us. Grandma works really hard preparing delicious treats for us, and the other farm animals help her get everything nice and cozy.

One thing that we all enjoy is going to church. Momma says there is nothing like sharing God's Word with your family. The church building is very old and large, and we get to sit up in the rafters and listen to the beautiful singing and preaching. We love the old songs, and there is nothing better than sitting next to Grandma and hearing her sing. Momma says she has the voice of an angel, and I believe her.

Another thing I enjoy is Grandpa telling us Bible stories. He can make you feel like you are right there seeing everything as it happens. One of my favorite stories is the Creation. When Grandpa starts to tell us about how God created all of us and how he knows the number of hairs on our heads and the strands of fur on every creature, you could hear a pin drop because it is so quiet. No one wants to miss a word. All the animals in the barn listen to my grandpa, and that just shows us that he is a very wise mouse.

I hope that you get to hear the wonderful stories from the Bible. If you aren't old enough to read, just



Church Mouse cont. on page 8

Radio for Kids

by Jeanine Garrison

When I was young, we got up on Saturday and spent the morning watching cartoons on TV, just like children all across America. Not having young children or even grandchildren, I confess that I really don't know what children's cartoons and Saturday morning TV shows are like today, but perhaps you would like an alternative to the usual Saturday morning programming—radio for kids.

As I am getting ready for the day, I generally listen to at least parts of five different kids' programs which might interest your children and build them up spiritually. The first is *Keys for Kids* with the host Uncle Charlie, who gives a Bible lesson for the kids. I hear the program about 6:30 am on American Family Radio 90.7 FM. If you can't get the station, you can go to their internet website at www.keysforkids.org. A radio finder may help you find a station nearer you. I was not able to find a place to listen to the radio broadcast online, but they do have an APP available. A valuable feature to this program are the devotional books that are available to order for kids.

Another show is *We Kids*, self-described as Christ-centered radio for little people. The likeable host is Mr. Nick, who begins by saying hello to many of the children who have written in, giving the show a very personal touch. Children usually sing the songs and recite the Bible verses on the program. Later Mr. Nick leads everyone at home in "March Time". This show is my favorite for younger children and is very Bible-based. You can go to the website www.wekids.org to hear the program, get coloring pages and other information regarding the We Kids ministry. The section "Good News" has an understandable plan of salvation with drawings.

A show that would appeal more to older children is *Jonathan Park and the Creation Response Team*. Children who like science and ad-

venture would enjoy the travels of Jonathan Park and the team as they travel the world seeking to prove the truth of Creation and God's word. The narrator clarifies that while the story is fictional, many of the facts presented are true. You also can hear the program on the website www.jonathanpark.com.

The most well-known radio program is *Adventures in Odyssey*. The show was launched in 1987

by Focus on the Family as an audio drama about fictional characters in a Midwestern town called Odyssey. The scripts of Biblical and moral lessons are intended for ages 8–12. You can hear the program on the website www.adventuresinodyssey.com as well as order other episodes, DVDs, devotional books, etc. Kids (parents, too) love these programs for car trips.

My favorite program (as an adult) is *Life at the Pond*. As children listen to humorous stories about the animals that live at the pond, they learn life and biblical lessons. Floyd the turtle, who loves sweets, is my favorite character, and I always chuckle when they mention Dr. Holstein, the chicken, or when the narrator gets involved in the story. The program can be heard at the website www.lifeatthepond.com.

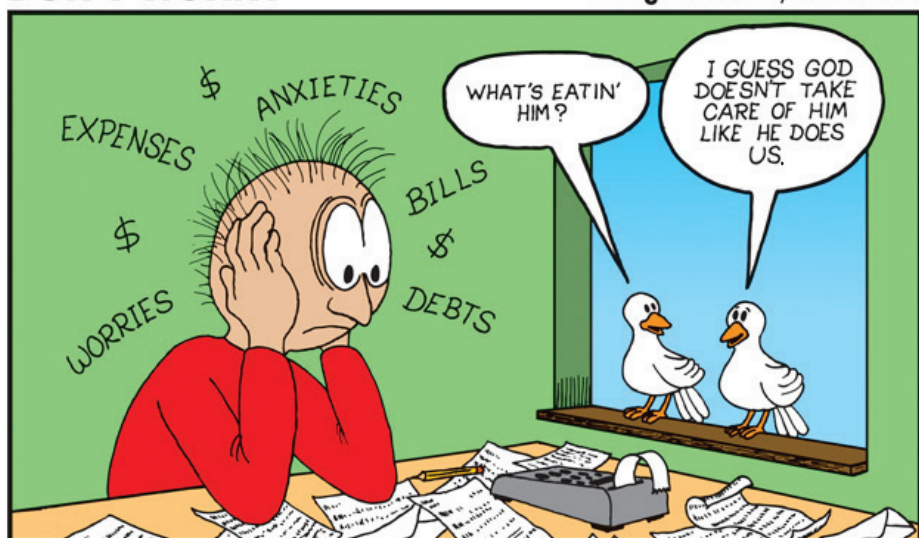
The only drawback to these radio shows is the music, which may be a little more contemporary than some parents would approve of. As always, parents should preview any new programming and apply their own family's standards. Some of the programs have more Bible in them than others, but they are foremost entertainment. Overall, they are an edifying alternative for the usual worldly amusement designed to mold our children. Parents just might find themselves eager to tune in as well.

Jeanine Garrison lives in Clinton County with her husband Tim. The couple has three grown children.



DON'T WORRY

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

— MATTHEW 6:26–27 NIV

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FUN FOR KIDS (of All Ages)

Fun With Tongue Twisters



Hey, kids!! This issue we are going to have a little fun with tongue twisters. See if you can say the tongue twisters below. How fast can you say them and not make any mistakes? Careful you don't get your tongue tangled in your eye teeth or you won't be able to see what you are saying!

Betty Botter bought some butter, but she said "This butter's bitter! But a bit of better butter will but make my butter better" So she bought some better butter, better than the bitter butter, and it made her butter better so 'twas better Betty Botter bought a bit of better butter!

I thought a thought. But the thought I thought wasn't the thought I thought I thought. If the thought I thought I thought had been the thought I thought, I wouldn't have thought so much.

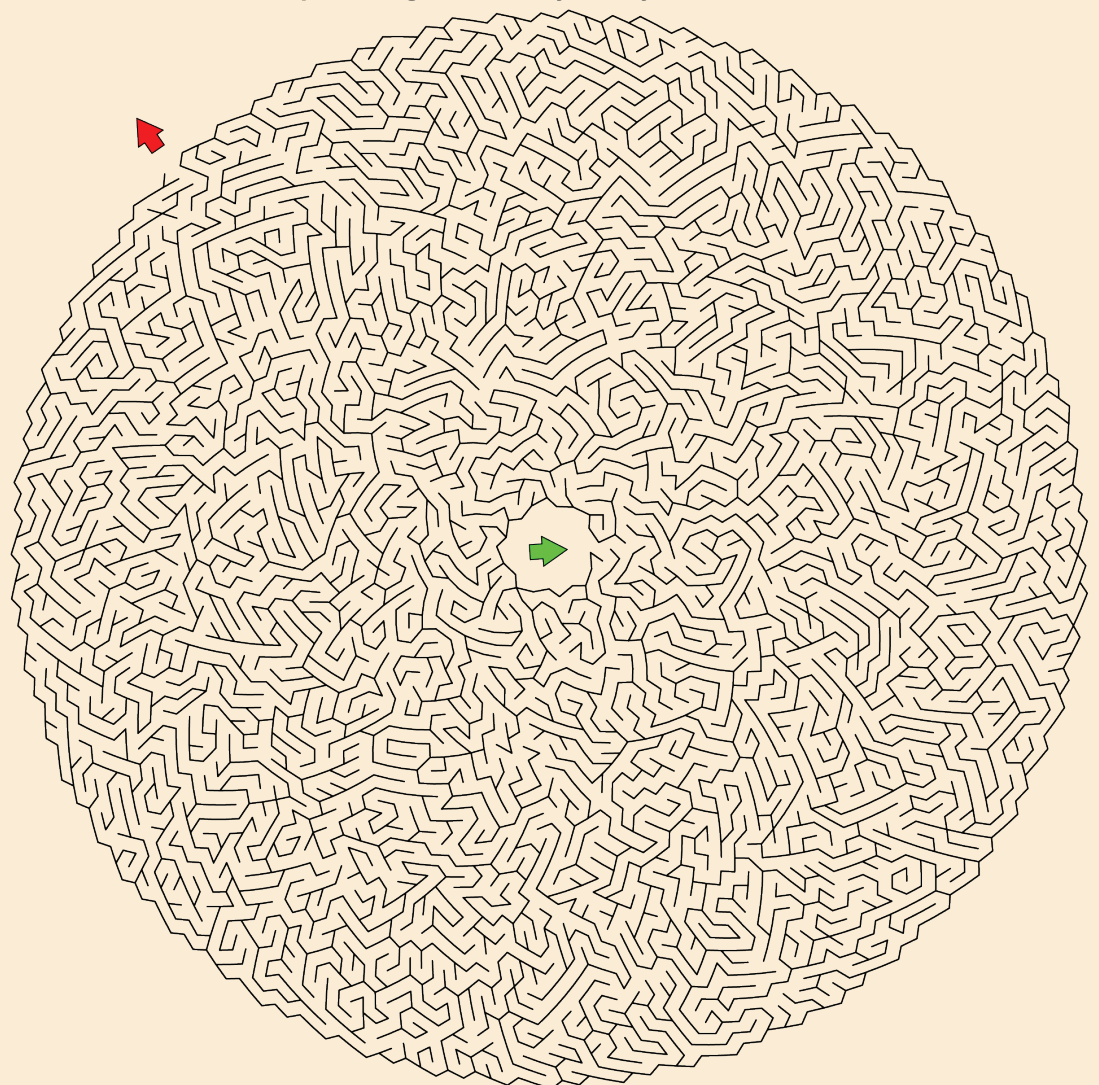
A skunk sat on a stump. The stump thought the skunk stunk. The skunk thought the stump stunk. What stunk, the skunk or the stump?

If one doctor doctors another doctor does the doctor who doctors the doctor doctor the doctor the way the doctor he is doctoring doctors? Or does the doctor doctor the way the doctor who doctors doctors?

MAZE CRAZE

Super Tough Mazes by KrazyDad, Book 24

Maze #7



KRAZYDAD.COM/PUZZLES
Need the answer? <http://krazydad.com/mazes/answers>

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The Resurrection? C'mon Man!

by Jamie Purciful

The modern mind can find it extremely difficult to wrap itself around core Christian beliefs such as the virgin birth and the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. Some argue that to believe such things means you have to suspend your rational thinking, throw your brains in the trash and take a blind leap of faith. I find it curious that people who pass this kind of judgment have not really investigated the historical-legal proofs available to us concerning these things. It's easy to dismiss these core beliefs because

these things just don't happen in our everyday life occurrences, but that doesn't necessarily mean they can't happen.

A few months ago there was a Mississippi man that was pronounced dead by his local coroner. He was taken to a funeral home where a few hours later, as they were about to prepare him for embalming, he began moving and kicking inside the body bag, incredibly now very much alive. Of course this event made national news, some even calling it a miracle, but the one thing that was never debated was the fact that this man was really alive after being pronounced dead.

Two thousand years ago, Jesus was publicly executed and sealed in a guarded tomb. Three days later the tomb was empty and a healthy Jesus was out walking around, engaging and having discourse with people. Now if this event were to happen today, can you imagine the commotion and frenzy that would take place? It would be a media circus of unparalleled proportions. Well, the situation was not much different in the Roman Empire at that time. It

did cause a tumult, even without the media sources available to us today. Then, just as now, some just could not wrap their minds around what was happening. If anyone wanted to squash the news that Jesus was resurrected, all they had to do was produce the body and that would have been the end of that. But no one did. If anything, the one fact that was not disputed was that Jesus' tomb was empty. Of course, some said the body was stolen, but how does that explain the live appearances of Jesus after his death? Was someone

doing a "Weekend at Bernie's" type of stunt with the body? Seems like that ruse would have eventually been found out and the perpetrators laughed out of town. Even Jesus' disciples were unbelieving at first but were soon convinced, turning from hiding cowards to boldly proclaiming what they knew to be true, leaving their eyewitness accounts for us today of what they experienced. There are even surviving extra-biblical accounts of Roman correspondence which acknowledge that the early Christians were preaching that Jesus was resurrected.

At the same time, it is interesting that those who didn't want to believe were at a loss to come up with any credible explanation or evidence to refute the news that was being spread. All they could do was tell people to quit talking about it and eventually resorted to outright persecution against those that did. So what was the objection? Those that saw and knew Jesus after his resurrection understood the moral implications; mainly it validated His claims about Himself, His miracles and His teachings. That is

Resurrection *cont. on page 10*



ask your parents to read a story from the Bible every night before you go to sleep. God's Word is very important to us all and it tells us how important every one of us is in God's eye.

Thomas on Vacation *cont. on page 6*

I have to go now; it is time to go to bed. I am so excited to say my prayers tonight. I have so much to be thankful for and I am going to include you in my prayers. My prayer for you is that God will keep you in His loving arms and that you will take time each day to look around at all He has given you.

God's Gifts

God has given us many gifts

We just need to look around

The clouds in the sky

The sun shining

And the beautiful flowers in the ground

His blessings are there for us to see

No matter if you are big and tall

Or little, just like me.



Terry lives with her husband in Howard County and teaches a children's class at Victory Baptist Church.

Do you ever wonder what the food is going to be like in Heaven? I wonder if they ever serve deviled eggs? Since we'll probably have wings, maybe they give us airline food!



Pastor Larry had been watching too much "Seinfeld."

Happiness *cont. from page 2*

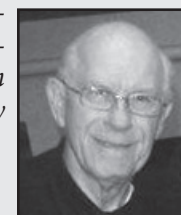
pening that brought me joy and delight. I won the sealed bid auction on a couple of surplus Chicago Mail Trucks, which for some reason made me deliriously happy. I finished my private license in the same rented plane I had been flying. Now I could take passengers, so my Dad and I borrowed a Piper J-4, and I flew us to Arkansas and Oklahoma to look over John Brown University. It had courses in missions and aviation, and I thought the Lord might be leading me there. The delight of being the pilot in command on a long cross country flight with my Dad made me so wonderfully happy that I began wondering why I had waited so long to surrender completely to the Lord's will.

And to top it all off, at the new school, where nobody knew what a

jerk I was, I met a girl. Well, actually, we didn't meet until after our date started. You see, she asked me for a date!

Hey, you talk about happiness and joy; for me it never really started until I completely and sincerely yielded everything to my Lord Jesus Christ. It doesn't really matter how much we know about Him. It's how well we know Him that counts. And we can't really be really happy until we're totally yielded to Him.

Jim Wright earned his MA in Engineering from Oklahoma State, is a Certified Flight Instructor, and is retired from EDS. Jim is a Deacon at Victory Baptist Church.



"If you take care of yourself and walk with integrity, you may be confident that God will deal with those who sin against you. Above all, don't give birth to sin yourself; rather, pray for those who persecute you. God will one day turn your persecution into praise."

— Warren Wiersbe

Lessons From Little Ones

"I'm H-A-P-P-Y"

by Brenda Howard



I'm h-a-p-p-y, I'm h-a-p-p-y, I'm h-a-p-p-y! And so went the sing-song voice of a little boy all morning long. After listening to this phrase over and over his mother finally asked him what h-a-p-p-y meant. He stopped for a moment, then with complete confidence announced, "I'M HOOKED ON PHONICS!"

Though he didn't have a clue what h-a-p-p-y meant, it was obvious that he **was** happy while he went about playing and doing all the things little boys do to keep themselves entertained. After all, three-year-olds don't have too many cares in this world when they are being cared for by loving parents.

Often we wonder, "How can I have joy when everything seems so wrong around me?" Many of us are either personally going through deep trials or are close to someone who is suffering. I've seen incredible testimonies of God's grace in some as they turned to Him for strength, wisdom, peace, and that joy that only comes from Him. They took to heart the words of David: *Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore* (Psalm 16:11).

Does that mean that one can always smile and whistle a merry tune while going through deep trials? Absolutely not! Throughout the Psalms we see David pouring out his heart to God time and time again, often while weeping and in deep anguish. But, in that last sentence is the key—he poured out his heart **to God**. *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble* (Psalm 46:1). As David spent hour after hour with his God, he learned more and more about God's character. The same happens with us as we spend time with God. This truth reminds me of a song that I recently heard, written by Benjamin Everson.

*When the darkness surrounds you,
And God seems so silent,
Your back's against the wall.
You may be tempted to doubt God's goodness.*

*It feels like He won't hear your call.
The questions take shape and cloud your mind.*

*"Is God in control after all?
My life's out of balance and I'm going to fall!"*

*But if you'll read in the Bible page after page,
You'll see that He's there, and he'll never forsake.*

*Surrender your life is all you must do.
You'll begin to see God's point of view:
He's there to change YOU!*

Chorus:

*Go pray again. Go kneel again.
Go knock on the door, ask Him for more
Strength for the fight, peace in the night.
Trusting by faith, the answer He'll send.
Go pray again. Go kneel again. Go pray again.*

I'll pray again.

One of the fruits of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23 is joy. When I was young I thought that this was a list of things that I had to work on myself. Trying to do all those things only produced frustration, since none of those come naturally to a sinner—even a saved sinner. I finally came to understand that as I surrender my will to the Holy Spirit, then those characteristics will flow out of my heart.

As we yield to the Holy Spirit, then we will be able to say with Paul, *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us* (Romans 8:18).

*Brenda and her husband
Bruce live in Kokomo,
Indiana. They have one
married daughter and
one grandson.*



Did You Know . . .

- each time you see a full moon you always see the same side?
- Tennessee is bordered by 8 states: Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina and Virginia - more than any other in the US?
- a giraffe can clean its ears with its 21 inch tongue (WOW!)?
- on your birthday you share it with 9 million others?
- grapes explode when you put them in the microwave? (DON'T YOU DARE!!)

Waiting at the Traffic Light

www.freechristianillustrations.com/suffering

We all dislike the inconvenience of traffic lights. They stop us mid-journey and delay us from reaching our destination. However, think of the chaos on our roads without them.

In our busy lives we can become so impatient to reach our destination that we grow irritated with life's many red lights. Sadly, when interruptions make us frustrated, it is the first sign we are losing our graceful way. It won't be long before we are so preoccupied with our own plans that we are completely insensitive to the destinations of others.

Instead, we should take every delay as an opportunity to relax and look around – otherwise, we will never enjoy life's journey because we are so focused on reaching our destination. God is in control of all life's traffic lights. We should be confident of reaching our objectives at precisely the right time—even allowing time to show compassion and consideration to other travelers.

If we continue to speed through life's red lights, God is the policeman who stops our reckless driving to avoid a fatal accident. He gives us a ticket (divine discipline) to remind us there are other drivers on the road-of-life who also have very important destinations (Philippians 4:11-13).



Every Need Supplied *cont. from page 1*

meet those needs. Consider the vast array of fruits, vegetables, herbs, and other edible plants that we consume. The nourishment our bodies need comes not from man-made sources, but from the purposely designed creation of God!

This truth has recently been refreshed in my mind as I have been newly introduced to a tree called Moringa. If you are not familiar with this tree, its leaves have seven times the vitamin C of oranges, four times the vitamin A of carrots, four times the calcium of milk, three times the potassium of bananas, and two times the protein of yogurt. Furthermore, the seeds can act as a coagulant removing suspended solids from water, which is of great value in countries where clean water is scarce (<http://forest.mtu.edu/pcforestry/resources/studentprojects/moringa.htm>). Virtually every part of the tree is beneficial in some way! Powder from the leaves and/or seeds of this tree have been added to baby formula in third world countries to achieve a much faster rate of healing for malnourished babies. There are many more useful aspects to this little known tree and you can read more about it at the website referenced above as well as at the website www.treesforlife.org. What has really caught my attention about this particular tree, however, is the loca-

tion in which it grows. If you visit the latter of the two websites mentioned, you will find two maps. The first shows the countries where Moringa grows. The second shows the countries where 5-35% of the population is malnourished and would benefit greatly from the use of this plant. Amazingly, the two maps are nearly identical! I encourage you to visit this website and look at the maps. Every time I see them I stand in awe at the provision of God! He didn't just randomly create things and throw them onto the earth. Rather, He specifically and purposely created and placed exactly what we need where we need it! He is a God of order and He is a God of love.

The next time you pick produce from your garden, take a breath of oxygen, or benefit from plant life in any way, think of God and thank Him for giving us all that we need. You may not always have everything you want, *But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus* (Philippians 4:19).

Marlin Carpenter, a Master Gardener, operates Garden Gate Greenhouse at 500 S and Hwy 19 in Miami County. Stop by for all your gardening needs.

egardengate.com



Summer Reading *cont from page 5*

as you go along, thereby helping your child to become an “active” reader and to understand what he is reading. Reading aloud motivates your child to keep reading, whether they are books of his own choosing or books from a summer reading list.

- Connect reading with planned summer activities. Read a story about a child who goes to summer camp. Compare and contrast your child’s experience with that of the characters in the story. If your child is showing rabbits in 4-H, he can read about rabbits and their care, etc.
- Allow your children to pick summer reading books. Often children do not like reading because they are not interested in the books that they read in school. Allowing them to pick books that interest them helps them see that it is possible to enjoy reading. If they enjoy reading, they will be motivated to read more. If your child’s teacher has sent home a summer reading list, alternate reading required books with those of your child’s choice.
- Help your children choose books at a comfortable reading level. If you have a child that isn’t motivated to read, it could be that he finds reading difficult. With all the testing that is done in schools today, your child’s teacher should be able to tell you his reading level. If you are unable to obtain this information from the school, listen to your children read. If they read smoothly with expression and can accurately explain what they have read, then more than likely they are reading at a comfortable level. If a child makes five or more errors while reading a page of approximately 50 words,

the book is too difficult for him (www.pbs.org/parents/education/reading-language/reading-tips/summer-reading-tips-for-parents-of-kindergartners-first-graders-and-readers-writers). If you are still uncertain, consult your local children’s librarian.

- Encourage your children to read things other than books. Make a variety of reading material available to your children. They can read about favorite sports teams in the newspaper. Look through a cookbook for a new recipe they would like to try. Read various children’s magazines such as Ranger Rick, National Geographic World, and God’s World News. In my parents’ bathroom, there is an old chamber pot on the floor which contains various forms of reading material. My little brother was never much for reading when he was young, but he did enjoy reading the jokes and humorous stories from the Reader’s Digests while he was in the porcelain library.

As a parent, you are responsible for your children’s education. It is up to you to see that your children progress in their ability to read. If reading is not a priority for you, more than likely it won’t be for your children either. Lack of proper motivation to read will impair your children’s success both in and out of the classroom. *Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it* (Proverbs 22:6).

Jill teaches a preschoolers class at VBC and currently works in a public library. She has taught in a Christian school in England.

**Resurrection** *cont from page 8*

something the enemies of Jesus could not accept or deal with, thus more than likely the source of their objection to believing in the resurrection. Even the Apostle Paul said that without the resurrection, his preaching was useless and believing in Christ was futile. On the other hand, Paul understood that if the resurrection was true, then certain sobering facts were inescapable—a coming judgment was a certainty and repentance in Christ was a necessity. For Paul and to all of those who met the risen Jesus, to not believe would mean suspending their rational thinking, tossing their brains in the

trash, and taking a blind leap of faith.

Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead (Acts 17:30-31).

Jamie Purcifull is married to Lori and they have two daughters. Jamie works as a respiratory technician at Community Howard Hospital.

**The Fundamentals** *cont from page 4*

yourself from the world on one hand and still serve others on the other. What we mean is that we do not give in to the world’s system of living. Jesus taught us to be the one who serves, not the one who insists on being served. Jesus taught us to love our enemies and do good to them. That is certainly not the world’s way of doing things.

Finally, we need to always realize it is the Holy Spirit Who is working in and through us. There is a danger in becoming proud of our work for the Lord. If that happens, then we are in jeopardy of losing some of that sweet fellowship with our Lord and others, and perhaps even losing some of the eternal rewards God has laid up for us in Heaven.

I certainly pray this series has been a blessing to you. I hope those of you who have always wondered what those crazy Christians believe have learned a thing or two. I’m sure you now have more questions than you did before, but I hope you will continue to look into biblical doctrines and gain further enlightenment. For those of you who are Christians, I pray you have been blessed by being reminded of the incredible blessings God has for us, not only in the future, but also for the good ole’ here and now!

Matthew Turner is principal of Victory Christian Academy and co-founder of the Kokomo TEA Party. Contact Matt: vcamatt@yahoo.com.



"To be assured of our salvation is no arrogant stoutness. It is faith. It is devotion. It is not presumption. It is God's promise."
— Aurelius Augustinus (354-430)

Unforgiving Spirit *cont from page 1*

just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things (Philippians 4:8).

This verse clearly implies two things. First, we are responsible for what we think about. Secondly, we can control, by God’s grace and power, what we think about. We are not responsible for the thoughts that come to our minds, but we are responsible for what we do with them.

When you think about how someone has wronged you after you have forgiven them, you need to ask the Lord to help you think about something else. If you keep thinking about the wrong, the ill feelings will come back, and you will start down the resentment, bitterness, hatred trail again.

B. Forgiveness is a promise to God not to raise the issue again.

You promise not to raise it to your spouse or to anyone else. In fact, if at any time you raise an issue of an offense to anyone, outside of church restoration, you are a gossip doing the devil’s work. If you have forgiven someone, don’t bring up the offense again. If you do, you are now the one in need of forgiveness!

C. Invest in your spouse.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; ⁴⁵ That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust (Matthew 5:44-45).

Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. ²¹ Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good (Romans 12:20-21).

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also (Matthew 6:21).

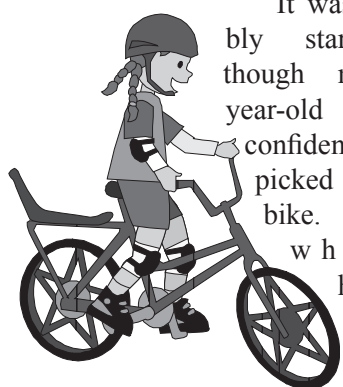
When someone wrongs you, your heart is distanced from the person. The feelings part of your relationship may be destroyed, but it can be rebuilt when you begin to invest in the offender. Love is giving time, effort, resources, attention, etc. Your heart will once again warm to him (her).

Mike Ennis serves as Pastor of Victory Baptist Church. A native of Kokomo, he has pastored for 30 years. He and his wife Joan have 4 married daughters and 8 grandchildren.



Wobbly

by Emily Pier



It was a wobbly start even though my six-year-old looked confident as she picked up her bike. A breeze whipped her hair across her face as she looked over her shoulder to throw me a smile and to make sure I was there, watching. Ever my skirt wearer, she had protestingly donned jeans. Last year she had finished the best part of bike season fairly proficient. We had even biked together, though a little precariously, in the addition where we live. Now, at her first attempt this year, she expected the best. However, the bike wobbled under her as her muscle memory geared up for the first time in months. She fell over several times. It actually took a couple of days for her, but soon she was riding confidently and feeling rather happy, I would say.

My bike wobbled too as my friend told me they were headed back to the hospital with her little girl. I was walking along just fine when God asked me to start riding again. I too glanced over my shoulder to make sure He was there. I got out my Bible and let truth sink into my heart from passages that had sustained my life in storms more than once. A couple of the pages seemed to fall open to these deep, life-preserving verses. Others stayed hidden deep in my own rusty "muscle memory". A slightly easier season of life had allowed my muscles to weaken a bit as I focused on other things. Now my heart demanded them to do their job. I found myself reminded of my desperate need of Jesus.

So with "It Is Well" playing in the background, I got on my bike. I flexed my memory, "Is it first Corinthians four or second Corinthians?" I checked both and reread: *Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that*

far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

I climbed back up on the bike and unsteadily rode toward Jesus. The process of surrender and trust is a wobbly one at times, at least for me. The drive for me to encourage my friend with life-giving truth, not just kind words, made me get back up when I fell. However, I gained strength and momentum in the riding.

Paul reminded me of my aim in Philippians 3: *That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and may share His sufferings, becoming like Him in his death.* The courage God gave to the early disciples in Acts 14—strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God—gave courage to me. Jesus' life itself begets strength in Hebrews 5: *Although He [Jesus] was a son, He learned obedience through what He suffered.*

I continued reading, reminding myself of our sovereign God, our great treasure. As I focused my mind willfully on Who He is, my heart filled with love, adoration, and gratefulness. When the God of the universe promised Himself as Abraham's very own shield (Genesis 15), when He guaranteed the priestly tribe of the Levites the inheritance of Himself (Deuteronomy 18), then I found myself saying, "Lord, I want You as my shield and inheritance!"

You are my portion and my cup... indeed I have a beautiful inheritance Psalm 16 declares. *May all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You! May those who love Your salvation say evermore, God is great* Psalm 70:4 sings. *You are good and do good; teach me Your statutes* Psalm 119:68 reminds.

I am biking hard now in hot pursuit of God instead of my own understanding, and there is indeed the fullness of joy in His presence.

Emily lives in Howard County with her husband and has been actively involved in community outreach, such as Kokomo Urban Outreach, Bridges Outreach, and New Leaf Mentoring.

Mother's Corner *cont. from page 4*

against his brother: *If you are doing what is good, shouldn't you hold your head high?* Just as God distinctly responded to Cain and his rage that controlled his self-seeking desires, individuals are waylaid continuously by guilt that keeps them from God.

The prevalence of the many aforementioned sins cause one to wonder about the impact the acceptance of such will have on our children. Two principles that will help guide our children are absolutism and accountability.

The opposite of absolutism is moral relativism. Although seemingly acceptable, it corrodes the deep sense of right and wrong. These blurred lines are difficult for even adults at times. Clear lines of distinction give our youth a sense of security and teach self-control. God taught the Israelites to preserve their spiritual health and posterity by commanding them to live differently from other cultures. We can help children be set apart for God by continually reinforcing the right behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes as

well as rehearsing the American cultural values that do not uphold moral and spiritual truth.

Also, it is imperative for children to understand accountability. Attributing high esteem about one's accomplishments, time, and talents to oneself fuels destructive patterns. Explaining that each of us answers to someone is helpful. Teaching them in natural, as well as spiritual, terms God's ownership clarifies why accountability is important. Even if the rest of the world is removed from this truth, we must remember Romans 14:11-12: *As surely as I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow before me; every tongue will acknowledge God. So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.*

Ashlee and her husband, Stan, have four children. She is currently working on an advanced degree, lives in Howard County and serves our Lord at Victory Baptist Church.



Hey, kids of all ages. We had too much for the kid's page, so we snuck in this picture for you to color. How many colors can you put in Joseph's coat?



"Beginning well is a momentary thing; finishing well is a lifelong thing."
— Ravi Zacharias

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Jesus said: I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me (John 14:6).

Good works cannot save you.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Admit you are a sinner.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

Be willing to turn from sin (repent).

Jesus said: I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish (Luke 13:5).

Believe that Jesus Christ died for you, was buried, and rose from the dead.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

But God commendeth [demonstrated] his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved (Romans 10:9).

Through prayer, invite Jesus into your life to become your personal Saviour.

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation (Romans 10:10).

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved (Romans 10:13).



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